



REGIONAL CONTINUUM OF CARE COUNCIL
Tuesday, March 29, 2011
MINUTES

- CALL TO ORDER at 10:02 AM.
- ATTENDANCE ROLL, INTRODUCTIONS, GUEST WELCOME
RCCC welcomed *David Estrella*, Director of the Department of Housing and Community Development and thanked him for his ongoing support of the RCCC with actions such as the Section 8 Preference Pilot Project. Director Estrella recognized the work of RCCC leaders in fostering innovative approaches to addressing homelessness.

Brief introductions of Attorney *Steve Binder*, Office of the Public Defender, and *Tom Theisen, Esq*, Volunteer Bar Association and Legal Aid Society as presenters for the agenda focused on justice system issues and homelessness.

- PRESENTATION # 1: ***Local Initiatives on Justice Issues and Homelessness***
Steve Binder, Office of Public Defender provided information on the special court programs in San Diego, including Homeless Court, Behavioral Health Court, and Veterans Services. These programs turn the justice system approach “upside down”. Rather than appearing before the bench and pleading a case to have an alternative sentence proscribed, the programs help defendants prepare evidence for what they have already done to remedy the cause of their misdemeanor offense. The process helps to reconcile the client’s current investment in becoming more self-sufficient with the past criminal history.

In the Homeless Court Program, the defendant is referred to the court with verification of their participation in recovery programs, community service provided, etc. The client must meet the entry requirements of the participating homeless services agency before referral to the interest list for Homeless Court to Defense attorney and District Attorney. After review the case may be placed on the court calendar. The Defense Attorney meets with the client to help prepare for the court session. The packet of evidence that was prepared by the client, agency and defense attorney is shared with the prosecuting attorney and the parties negotiate. The final step is the formal hearing and judge’s order. The client completes follow-up activities ordered by the Court. Homeless Court does not address felony charges,

Two other alternative court pilot projects in San Diego have similar features. These are the Behavioral Health Court and the Veterans Court. Last year, San Diego began to offer a Behavioral Health court to divert some mentally ill persons from jail to supervised treatment programs in the community. Like the Homeless Court, the Behavioral Health Pilot project philosophy addresses the underlying cause of the criminal behavior by treating the mental health factors that contributed to the offense. It helps to break the cycle of repeated offense by intervening in cases where mental illness is “driving the crime”. The Veteran’s Court project is the most recent effort and the court heard its first cases in winter

2011. The original Homeless Court was motivated by the large number of veterans at the Veteran's Stand Down. Overtime, the community began to acknowledge the special circumstances of veterans, particularly recently separated veterans.

More information about these programs is available through Atty. Steve Binder, Office of the Public Defender, 619-338-4708 or Steve.Binder@sdcounty.ca.gov.

PRESENTATION II: Homeless Advocacy Program and Rights During SSI Appeals – Atty. Tom Theisen provided information on two items: the Legal Aid Homeless Advocacy Program and information from the National Senior Citizens Law Center (NSCLC) on the appeals process for SSI, SSDI recipients who have benefits decreased or termination.

The Homeless Advocacy Program operates in three locations, St. Vincent de Paul, Interfaith Community Services, and North County Lifeline. Fliers were distributed.

SSI Appeals: The NSCLC presentation covered appeals from a denial, reduction or termination of benefits paid by the Social Security Administration (“SSA”). The information did not include appeals for initial denial of benefits or for appeal of disability determination.

- Recipients of Old Age, Survivor, SSI and SS-DI benefits whose benefits are decreased or denied are entitled to a Hearing and to Continuation of Benefits as long as they file a timely appeal. All persons are entitled to due process that applies to all appeals of SSA decisions.
- Notice of proposed action. A notice of proposed action is mailed to the last reported address and is presumed received 5 days after date on face of notice. It is the recipient's responsibility to ensure that SSA has a current address.
- If appeal is filed within 10 (plus 5) days after date on face of notice, the individual's benefits will continue to the first hearing.
- Appeal must be filed within 60 (plus 5) days after date on face of notice.
- The appeal times can be extended for “good cause”, such as a barrier to the capacity to understand the notice (ie cognitive educational or language difficulty).

Appeal Options: Case Review, Informal or Formal Conference

- o Case Review: the client has right to review SSA files and present written and oral evidence and to have the case reviewed by someone other than the official who made the original determination. Decision should be within 5 days after claimant submits all evidence.
- o Conference: Conference should be scheduled within 15 days after appeal filed (seldom happens – 3 months). Notice of conference time and location mailed to claimant at least 10 days before conference. Claimant can request telephone conference or in-person conference at SSA office

Key Points: 1. Appeal must be filed within 65 days of date on the notice. 2. If an appeal is filed within 15 days, benefits will generally continue until the first appellate decision. 3. There are a wide range of due process protections that apply in SSA appeals.

A detailed handout was provided to members for their future reference.

- APPROVAL OF MINUTES of January, 2011 by consensus.

- STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT

- Employment Forum – Members of the Employment Subcommittee were congratulated and thanked for the success of the Annual Employment Forum held in February. Detailed notes from the session were distributed.
- Steering Committee Session with HomeBase – The Steering Committee met with Bridget De Jong, HUD technical Assistance Consultant who is also an attorney with HomeBase. This session helped to identify where the San Diego region is in the process of getting ready for HEARTH implementation. The session included a powerpoint presentation. The Steering Committee has also drafted a powerpoint about the RCCC strengths and areas for progress.
- Steering Committee Report on Meeting with Keys to Housing Advisory Board of Electeds; Selected members of the Steering Group met with the Keys Advisory Board of elected officials on March 3rd. Using a powerpoint presentation following the 7 Keys to Success outline that is used by Keys, members of the advisory board were exposed to the work of the RCCC. It was interesting to note that the majority of elected officials were not familiar with the RCCC. Overall, the seemed productive. The Advisory Group Chair (Todd Gloria) noted that it seems that the RCCC already provides much of what they have been looking for in a sustainable community structure. The powerpoint is available.
- City CoC – Episcopal Community Services has notified HUD that it intends to discontinue as the lead agency and grantee for the Women and Children's transitional housing grant at the end of 2011. The RCCC and City CoC will work with the grant partners to ensure that services and funds are not lost to the region.

- SUBCOMMITTEE and LIAISON REPORTS

- Legislative Committee – Rosemary Johnston, Kathi Houck *Action:* Authorize a letter to San Diego City Council members regarding CDBG allocations to be signed by the Facilitator on behalf of the RCCC. The letter will note the connections among homeless programs in creating a system that leverages resources and will identify each of the homeless programs not recommended for funding.
- Data Governance; HMIS – Craig Jones; Peter Callstrom; Matt Packard; Anne Kerr
 - PITC – This year's PITC included 550 volunteers and a more extensive survey instrument that includes the Vulnerability Index. This tool helps to identify more disabilities than in the past. A summary of the PITC was released earlier this month.
 - E-HIC – Most programs have verified their Housing Inventory information. The PITC and HIC must be reviewed and submitted in the HDX in May. The HIC forms the base for many sections of Exhibit I of our applications to HUD. Evaluation of our progress and funding is based on this. Members are asked to please respond promptly to requests from the RTFH on this matter.
 - Service Point 5 Transition. SP 5 will roll out on May 9th. The HMIS system will not be available from Friday AM May 6th until the 9th so that Bowman Systems and RTFH can complete the transition. RTFH is hosting SP 5 training for all programs during the month of April. Contact Kat Alexander at RTFH for more information.

- VA Programs – In December, the Veterans Administration directed VA homeless programs to plan to participate in the local HMIS system. The Grants and Per Diem programs had a deadline of March 31, 2011 to begin entering client level data into the HMIS. San Diego is fortunate in that we were easily able to meet that deadline since our veteran's GPD programs were already using HMIS. We will be working with the VA throughout the year to include other VA programs (like domiciliary).
 - Employment Committee – Jack Micklos, David Siegler – Thanks to the Salvation Army for their hospitality in once again providing the venue for the annual employment forum. .
 - Strategic Planning Reports
 - HPRP Update – Many of the HPRP program have expended (or committed) all their funds. The City of San Diego program is suspending applications for HPRP and does not expect to reopen.
- ANNOUNCEMENTS / OTHER BUSINESS
- ADJOURN